

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

Catching All the Cod They Can

By **LINDY BLAISDELL**

Dave (Baymen) Bitters struggled to find many bass last week. With no fish showing on top and no birds working bait, Dave relied on his sonar. The bass were deep, holding in schools and ready to feed. Charter Gene Depois and crew managed 22 on light tackle and fly rods.

Tom LaLiberte introduced a charter, up from Carolina, to a few stripers last week, including one 36-incher. Tom's best time on the Bay has been early, 4:30-6:30 a.m.

Fishing Race Point over the holiday weekend was a nightmare according to those that crossed the Bay. Too many boats, all the crazy people were out there crossing trolling lines, cutting off fishing boats, and in general, disrupting fishermen to the point some returned early. Chuck Cahill, returning early,



**DROP
A LINE**

found a huge school of 30-plus inch blues feeding on top. Swimming lures and chunk mackerel proved to be what the blues wanted, as Chuck caught his personal best at 17 pounds.

Jay Hunt did the Stellwagon trip over the holiday weekend. He was rewarded with a mixed limit catch of big cod and medium haddock. While Jay was way offshore, some local anglers were catching cod only a few miles out. Bitters says clam baits in 60-plus feet of water between the Gurnet and Rexham Beach, brought nice cod aboard when you could avoid the dogfish.

Bridge fishermen putting in their time are catching a few schoolies. Most fishermen there like the incoming high tide. Most any bait will work if you can keep it up off the bottom and away from the crabs.

I stopped by Island Creek on Monday the fifth with a bucket full of shiners. Just casting from the beach, I was lucky enough to catch three largemouth bass, all about a pound and a half. Each bass came in covered with weeds as did my shiners on each bait check. Three other fishermen (with boats) reported weeds to the surface covering most of the pond. In places they couldn't use their electric motors or any lure except a wheedles surface plug. We all agreed Island Creek is one of the best big bass ponds on the South Shore. Each season bass of six and seven pounds are caught and released. Each season the weeds come back thicker and thicker. Island Creek will become a spring, before the weeds come up, and a fall, after the weeds drop down fisheries soon.

Chandler Pond, along Lake Shore Drive had the same weed problem as Island Creek several years ago. Chandler was treated with a chemical weed killer, while Island Creek was weed harvested. What a waste of money the weed harvest was. Chandler Pond is beginning to form a few lily pad islands and shoreline cover, the weed growth is in recovery; however, the pond is still fishable and you can use any type of motor. I have fished Chandler several times this summer, catching largemouth bass, chain pickerel, calico as well as perch and sunfish. Bass in Chandler show excellent growth as do all the fish. Chandler should remain fishable for the next four or five years. Too bad Island Creek might turn into a meadow before the first batch of herring begin looking for spawning areas.

Bob O'Neil, host of the Atlantic Angler, reports his customers were out enjoying the best weekend of the year and catching lots of fish. Colin Buckley scored from PPB bringing a nice 30-inch, 9-pounder over the rail. Ted Kurker, using chunk mackerel landed a beauty, 27 pounds.

O'Neil says fishermen are using clams as effective bait for stripers lately. Some fishermen are having success with them in the Beach Channel and around Clarks Island. Reports of squid in the Bay around Bug Light, raised the hopes of anglers looking for cow bass.

Not much action on flounder or fluke of late. Bob has plenty of chubs for the fluke chasers or those hoping to catch a few largemouth bass in either Chandler or Island Creek ponds.